

-Name: Kathy Scott

-Attribute this submission to: Kathy Scott

-Organization (if applicable): Not Applicable

-Title of Hearing: Hearing on Responding to Long-Term Unemployment

I have been unemployed for over 2 years. Prior to my being laid off, I was a Project Manager on a research project at the University of Chicago. I am college educated and have 15+ years professional experience in program management in public health. I have applied to over 450 jobs, possibly more, but I have stopped counting.

I have exhausted the 99 weeks of unemployment insurance, which I had been greatly appreciative of, even though it was significantly less than what I used to make, it still was a life line for me in paying my rent, paying my utilities, and buying food.

My benefits expired in March of this year, and since then, friends and family have loaned me money and I have applied for food stamps. Though I greatly appreciate their generosity, it can't go on forever and if I don't get some sort of job soon – like within the month – I will have to give up my apartment, as I won't be able to afford it.

Never in my life have I had to contemplate such a thing. I didn't make a fortune as a project manager, but I did make enough to support myself. I live in a studio apt., don't own a car, have used furniture, but all that was fine, because I could support myself. Now I don't sleep well at night, wondering what I will do.

I have applied for temporary jobs, but was recently told by one firm that because I have been unemployed for so long, that the temp firm's clients wouldn't be interested in me as a potential employee because they only want people whose work experience has occurred in the last 6 months.

When I asked them how this policy could possibly be seen as congruent with the needs of so many unemployed people given the recession, I got no answer. It is beyond infuriating. With over 15 years of professional experience, apparently I am not qualified enough to be a file clerk.

Additionally, as another example of how tough it is – I have signed up with some organizations to send me email alerts when jobs that I might be qualified for, occur with their company. I received one several days ago, went to apply, and their website said the job was no longer available.

When I inquired with the HR dept. why I was getting these seemingly conflicting messages, the rep explained to me that because the economy is so bad, and they get so

many resumes, that they will remove jobs from the website as open because they can only handle so many resumes and they just get too many for one job.

To say that I am aggravated, frustrated and scared is an understatement. And contrary to what I guess some think, I am not lazy, nor was I lazing around, 'enjoying' being on unemployment.

Due to the length of my joblessness, I have lost approximately \$30,000 in income that I could have been using to pay off bills or more importantly, saving for retirement. On unemployment, I was living on about \$1000 less a month – and since I have been unemployed for over 2 years, that's where that figure comes from.

I am one of the 99ers. Please help. We are not lazy, nor wanting to live off the government. We are intelligent, professional, hardworking people just trying to make it through a tremendously difficult time.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my concerns.